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Security Council

Fifty-first Year

Provisional

3693rd Meeting

Friday, 30 August 1996, 11.50 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Eitel	(Germany)
Members:	Botswana	Mr. Nkgowe
	Chile	Mr. Searle
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Abdel Aziz
	France	Mr. Ladsous
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Lopes Cabral
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Richmond
	United States of America	Mr. Inderfurth

Agenda

Demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping

96-86138 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has reviewed the issue of demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping and has given careful consideration to the views expressed in the open debate under the item 'Demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping' in its 3689th meeting on 15 August 1996.

"The Security Council, bearing in mind its responsibilities with regard to United Nations peace-keeping, notes that the widespread indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines in areas of United Nations peace-keeping operations poses serious impediments to such operations and to the safety of United Nations and other international personnel. Against this background, the Council states the following:

"1. Operational demining should be, wherever appropriate, an important element and an integral part of peace-keeping mandates. This will facilitate the implementation of those mandates and better enable the Secretary-General to allocate appropriate resources towards achieving their objectives.

"2. The early deployment of mine-clearance units will often be important to the effectiveness of a peace-keeping operation. The Council encourages the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations to examine options for achieving such early deployment. It also encourages Member States to examine whether and in what form they might be able to help in this respect.

"3. The tasks of, on the one hand, operational mine clearance during peace-keeping operations, which is the responsibility of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, and, on the other hand, longer-term humanitarian mine-clearance activities, which fall under the responsibility of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, are different. The Council is, however, aware of linkages and complementarities between different elements of conflict resolution as well as of the need to ensure a smooth transition from demining as a peace-keeping requirement to demining as part of peace-building in a follow-up phase.

"The Security Council, thus, is of the opinion that coordination and a clear delineation of responsibilities between the two Departments as well as with regard to other United Nations agencies dealing with demining could be further improved so as to avoid duplication of effort and to guarantee a coherent and integrated approach towards the whole range of short and long-term demining needs. With particular reference to paragraph 51 of the report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations of 7 May 1996 (A/51/130), the Council requests the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts aiming in this direction.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of coordination by the United Nations of activities related to mine clearance in the context of United Nations peace-keeping, including those by Regional Organizations, in particular in the areas of information and training.

"4. The primary responsibility for demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping lies with parties responsible for the laying of mines. Parties to a conflict must desist from further mine laying once a peace-keeping operation is established. They are also obliged to facilitate humanitarian and military demining efforts by providing detailed maps and other relevant information on those mines that have already been laid by them and by contributing financially or otherwise to their removal.

"5. The international community should intensify, multilaterally or bilaterally, its efforts in assisting those parties to a conflict which have shown their readiness to cooperate with mine clearance, mine awareness and training programmes in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations. In this connection, the Council welcomes the establishment by the Secretary-

General of a United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Demining as a necessary and timely mechanism to channel funding to humanitarian demining operations.

"The Security Council appeals to all States to contribute to this Fund as well as to other voluntary funds set up by the Secretary-General for certain peace-keeping operations which contain demining elements.

"6. Demining activities should, as much as possible, make use of the appropriate modern mine-clearance technologies and specialized equipment and focus on the creation and strengthening of local demining capabilities; training programmes should attach particular importance to this aspect. Where this would be of benefit to the operational effectiveness of a peace-keeping operation, consideration should also be given to including provision for the training of a local demining capability in mandates of peace-keeping operations.

"The Security Council encourages the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, given its responsibility for a comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations, to continue and intensify its considerations of the operational demining aspects of peace-keeping operations. These considerations might include an analysis of mine-clearance experience in previous peace-keeping operations.

"The Security Council is of the view that the elements outlined in this statement are not exhaustive. The Council will thus keep this issue under review in the context of the establishment of peace-keeping operations and the consideration of specific mandates."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1996/37.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.